SARL NEWS - SUNDAY 25 November 2012

You are listening to ZS6SRL, the official radio station of the South African Radio League, the national body for amateur radio in South Africa. The SARL broadcasts a news bulletin every Sunday at 08:15 CAT in Afrikaans and at 08:30 CAT in English. To listen to a web stream, visit www.sarl.org.za, click on 'Amateur Radio Today' and follow the links for details. For audio via Echolink, connect to ZS0JPL-R.

You can download this bulletin and previous ones from www.sarl.org.za and also subscribe there to receive future bulletins by e-mail.

Your newsreader this morning is (name), (call sign), on 145,725 from Pretoria, with relays on 7,066 MHz and 3,695 MHz SSB. (Other news readers change to suit).

SILENT KEYS

It is with regret that it must be announced that the keys of two radio amateurs became silent recently. They are:

That of Mike Muir, ZS6MUI, in the early hours of last Saturday the 17th November.

The other one is that of Buddy McCullen,ZS1MP. He was the holder of the a Jack Twine Merit Award (1986) and a Willy Wilson Gold Badge (1994).

We extend our deepest sympathies to the relatives and friends of the deceased and in particular to Annie, the wife of Mike, ZS6MUI.

(PAUSE)

IN THE NEWS TODAY:

ALL RADIO AMATEURS WILL HAVE TO REAPPLY FOR THEIR LICENSES

SARL ROADMAP TO REGULATORY REFORM

5 MHz PILOT FREQUENCIES FOR PROPAGATION STUDIES

THE 2013 SARL AGM

You are listening to ZS6SRL. Stay tuned for more details on these and other important and interesting items.

ALL RADIO AMATEURS WILL HAVE TO REAPPLY FOR THEIR LICENSES

At the ICASA/SARL Liaison committee meeting held this week, ICASA informed the SARL that following a qualified audit by the Auditor General, ICASA has been instructed to implement regulation 15 of the Radio Frequency Spectrum Regulations which stipulate that an amateur radio license can only be renewed for up to five years after which an new application has to be submitted.

All Radio Amateurs will be required to re-apply for a license for the period of 1 April 2013 till 31 March 2018. Payment of the annual license fee can be made annually or for the full 5 year period in which case a discounted rate applies.

Details are expected to be gazetted in the next few weeks. Do nothing right now. SARLNEWS will keep you informed and the requirements, procedure and the necessary forms will be made available on www.sarl.org.za after the publication of the Government Gazette.

Stay tuned to SARL News or visit the web site frequently. New information will be published as soon as it comes to hand.

SARL ROADMAP TO REGULATORY REFORM

The SARL Roadmap to regulatory reform will be discussed at a meeting with ICASA on 3 December when a working committee will be formed to explore the various regulatory issues pertaining to amateur radio. The Roadmap is available on www.sarl.org.za, select Amateur Radio Today and follow the links.

5 MHz PILOT FREQUENCIES FOR PROPAGATION STUDIES

The process was taken a step further at this week's liaison meeting. Hans van de Groenendaal, ZS6AKV, is working with the ICASA person in charge of spectrum to identify at least two channels for propagation and sharing studies. ICASA gave an undertaking to speed up the process and has given end January 2013 as the date when they expect the process to be finalised.

Radio amateurs and shortwave listeners can assist by monitoring the segment 5 250 - 5 450 kHz. Stations currently licenced in this section of the band are 5 kHz apart. Details of the proposed research project can be found at www.sarl.org.za, select Amateur Radio today.

NASA PHONESAT COMING SOON TO AMATEUR RADIO

Scientists at NASA's Ames Research Centre have built the most affordable amateur band satellite to date. Amateur Radio Newline carried the following details: The $3 500 orbital device is a cubesat the size of a coffee cup that uses an off-the-shelf Nexus One smartphone as a central processor and an inexpensive off the shelf radio for communications with the ground.

Called PhoneSat 1, the tiny bird is scheduled to launch by the end of this year or early 2013. Once on-orbit it will transmit back photos of Earth on an amateur radio band for 10 days, or until the battery dies.

Subsequent iterations will be capable of much more. For example, PhoneSat 2.0 will have a two-way S-band radio transponder which most satellites use to communicate with the ground and solar panels for extended life.

THE 2013 SARL AGM

It is that time of the year when the SARL starts preparing for the AGM.

The 2013 AGM wil be hosted by the West Rand Amateur Radio Club and will be held on 27 April 2013 at the National Amateur Radio Centre.

Clubs and members are reminded that the closing date for submitting motions to be discussed at the AGM, is 31 January.

Die SARL Council requests all affiliated clubs to submit a nomination for at least one councillor. This does not affect the normal nominations by individual members. It is, however, a fact that the SARL Council has a lot of work and needs willing and able councillors for this. A councillor must be nominated and seconded by an SARL member or affiliated club and be accompanied by a short amateur radio based CV and his signed statement that he is willing to serve as a councillor. Councillors should be experienced amateurs who can spend some hours per week on SARL business and can take part in council teleconference meetings.

There is no reason to delay until the last minute. Submit your motions and nominations now.

PLEASE CHECK YOUR MEMBERSHIP DETAILS

The ease and economy of communication by electronic means and the rising price of snail-mail communication, causes the SARL to use emails and SMSs to an ever increasing extent.

To enable the SARL to communicate with you, please ensure that your contact details are correct on the SARL database. This includes your email address, your phone and cell phone numbers, as well as your postal address. It can be checked by looking up your own call sign in the online call book and clicking on 'update'. This works for all records on the database, so it is not necessary to log on as a member.

The database is updated weekly. Take note that ICASA does not notify the SARL of any changes to your contact details or address. It is your responsibility to update your information with both the SARL and ICASA.

The Council of the SARL would like to encourage members who have no email address to acquire one. It is easy, convenient and inexpensive. There may come a time when snail mail communication of some items will no longer be worthwhile and they will only be communicated by electronic means.

Your membership details can also be checked by going to www.sarl.org.za/public/Membercheck.asp.

MEMBERSHIP CARDS

All members who have a valid email address on the SARL database will by now have received, by email, a membership card and a receipt for their subscription payment. The receipt will also show their login password for the 'members only' section of the SARL website. For members with no email address, the information will be sent by snail mail. Due to the amount of work involved in printing the labels, filling the eNvelopes etc. there will be a delay of some days.

Members are requested to check their email addresses on the SARL database. Members with no email addresses are encouraged to obtain an address - it is cheap, easy and convenient. Even an email address operated from an Internet café, will be quite adequate.

Members who receive printed copies of Radio ZS, will find an SARL bumper sticker enclosed. Other members will receive their bumper stickers by snail mail. Please use the stickers, they are intended to increase the visibility of the SARL. Be proud of your membership.

NEW MEMBERS

The SARL welcomes the 110 radio amateurs who passed the October 2012 RAE, to it ranks. All these members have now been captured on the database and will have membership until the end of June 2013.

The web passwords for the new members have been sent to them. All members, but especially new members, are reminded that in order to use the forum, they have to register for it seperately.

CONTEST NEWS

RaDAR Competition Results

True RaDAR.

No one took on the challenge as a "True RaDAR" operator except that Eddie, ZS6BNE, went for a two kilometer walk prior to the contest but did not carry his kit.

Field / Mobile station.

Tienie, ZS6MHH - 276 points Eddie, ZS6BNE - 192 points Peter, ZS6IQ (Maritime mobile) - 144 points

Fixed station.

None

Despite the relatively few participants, the general feeling is that the RaDAR contest should still be hosted biannually. There will be a rules change for future RaDAR contests which will prove to be quite exciting for anyone wishing to take on the challenge.

The SARL Digital contest.

This contest will be taking place on the 2nd December 2012 and not the 25th November 2012. Apologies for the confusion.

Registration with LOTW.

If you have not yet registered with LOTW (Logbook of the World) and would like to do so, please send a copy of your licence and ID to Geoff Levey, ZS6GRL, to hfmanager@sarl.org.za. If you have not received your licence yet, a letter

from ICASA stating that your licence has been paid will suffice. The process normally takes about 2 days.

PROPAGATION REPORT

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the solar activity is decreasing compared to last week's levels. Sunspot AR1618 has experienced some decay but its magnetic canopy harbours enough enery for X-class solar flares. A sunspot is a vast island of magnetism floating on the surface of the sun. Magnetic fields bubble up from the sun's interior to form the sunspot's dark cores, much like an island forming from the lava of an undersea volcano.

If you want to do your own frequency predictions, the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be around 71.

All the bands from 20 to 10 m will provide lots of DX fun with 15 m providing the best openings with 20 m not far behind. There will also be frequenct 10 m openings.

Please visit www.spaceweather.co.za for further information.

DIARY OF EVENTS 01 December - West Rand Amateur Radio Club flea market starting at 12:00. 02 December SARL Digital Competition. 31 January 2013 Last day for submission of nominations for councilors for the next term and motions for the 2013 AGM.

SARL News invites clubs and individuals to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and short-wave listeners. Submit news items - if possible in both English and Afrikaans to www.sarl.org.za/newsinbox.asp, not later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

The SARL also invites you to listen to Amateur Radio Today every Sunday morning at 10:00 CAT on 145,750 MHz in the Pretoria area, with relays on 7 082, 7 205 and 17 760 kHz. There is also a podcast by ZS6RO. For a web-stream and Echolink by ZS6FCS, visit www.sarl.org.za, click on 'Amateur Radio Today', go down the green column and click on 'LISTEN ON THE WEB'. A repeat transmission can be heard on Mondays at 18:30 UTC on 4 895 kHz ((A new time and frequency!). Reception reports are invited. We are particularly interested in reports of the 4 895 kHz transmission on Mondays at 18:30 UTC as the frequency is close to the proposed new amateur allocation near 5 MHz. Reception reports from all areas in South Africa would be useful in our bid to ICASA for frequencies pilot studies. Send reports to artoday@sarl.org.za.

Sentech sponsors the transmissions on the non-amateur frequencies.

You have listened to a bulletin of the South African Radio League compiled by George Honiball, ZS6NE.

Thank you for listening, 73.

/EX